

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 21-24, 26-35, and 48 are now pending in this application.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given to the claims as well as indicating that claims 25-26 and 33 contain allowable subject matter.

Anticipatory rejections of claims 21-24, 27-28, and 30-31

Claims 21-24, 27-28, and 30-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,325,096 ("Rising"). Claim 21 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 25, which the PTO has indicated to be allowable. Thus, claim 21 is allowable for at least this reason. Claims 22-24, 27-28, and 30-31 depend from and contain all the features of claim 21, and are allowable therewith for at least this reason, without regard to the further patentable features contained therein. For at least these reasons, favorable reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Obviousness rejections of claims 29, 32, 34-35, and 48

Claims 29 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rising. Claims 32, 34, and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rising in view of U.S. Patent 5,243,830 ("Ito"). Claims 29, 32, 34-35, and 48 depend from and contain all the features of claim 21, and are allowable therewith for at least the same reasons as claim 21, without regard to the further patentable features contained therein. For at least this reason, favorable reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowability of claim 26 and 33

Claims 25-26 and 33 are objected to but have been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claim 25 has been canceled, rendering the objection of this claim moot. Claims 26 and 33 have been rewritten into independent form. Claim 33 has also been

amended to correct minor grammatical and typographical errors. For at least these reasons, favorable reconsideration of the objection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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By

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